

SOUTH CAROLINA

HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE

Issue No. 6 | May 2020

NEWSLETTER



As we continue to adapt in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, I want to thank you for your ongoing efforts to prevent human trafficking, investigate and prosecute cases, and assist victims and survivors in their recovery. Your dedication has been evidenced by innovative and thoughtful approaches to the work.

Currently, it is difficult to accurately assess whether there has been a significant increase in human trafficking incidents during this public health crisis. We will not know the full impact of the pandemic until data has been collected and analyzed. However, we know that there were vulnerabilities present in our communities before the pandemic that heightened risk for human trafficking. Given the resulting economic and social-emotional toll, there is an ever-evolving increase in vulnerabilities beyond those related to health. These circumstances better enable traffickers to target their victims.

In an effort to combat the crime, it is important that we continue efforts to bring public awareness. The Attorney General's Office will be adding resources to the Task Force website that may be downloaded for use in further educating the community. We will also provide access to many of these resources, as well as updates and links to relevant information, on our social media

sites. Additionally, we will continue to promote the National Human Trafficking Hotline to help ensure tips are reported and victims have access to available services.

Task Force members will receive a survey in June that will help us better understand the impact of the pandemic on anti-human trafficking efforts in South Carolina. We are interested in topics such as the specific needs for survivor assistance, challenges to providing direct services, and successes in modifying policies and procedures as well as shifts in public engagement strategies. This information will help us in the development of disaster relief resources and protocols. Ideally, the survey will aid in strengthening our future response to such crises.

As previously announced via email, the June 5th Task Force meeting is canceled and replaced with an Executive Session. The September meeting will be held as scheduled, whether in person or via an online platform. We will keep you updated. Until then, stay well.

Kathryn Moorehead
Director, VAWA & Human Trafficking

STATE UPDATES

Due to COVID-19, the State Task Force's Labor Trafficking Roundtable has been postponed & the June 5th meeting has been cancelled. Please monitor our website and social media for updates on future meetings.

REGIONAL UPDATES

Coastal Region Human Trafficking Task Force

Family Court Judge Melissa Buckhannon is now an executive advisor to the task force. The Amber Alert training: Developing a Community Response to Child Sex Trafficking & Exploitation Specialized Training has been rescheduled for Oct. 15-16, 2020 in Myrtle Beach. For more information, please contact Sherri Smith at smithsh@horrycounty.org or Beverly Wilhelm at bwilhelm@coastal.edu

2nd Judicial Circuit Human Trafficking Task Force

Zoom Task Force Meeting on June 17 at 2PM. Email Eleanor Hunter at EHunter@CityofAikenSC.gov for the invitation information.

Upstate Human Trafficking Task Force

For updates on future meetings & events, visit <https://www.uhttf.org/>. Of note, Upstate Task Force member Safe Harbor is serving trafficking victims in Greenville, Anderson, and Oconee counties

Tri-County Human Trafficking Task Force

New website has launched: tricityhttf.org

RELEVANT ARTICLES AND REPORTS

- Department of Transportation doubles progress in the fight to end human trafficking
- Polaris—COVID-19 May Increase Human Trafficking in Vulnerable Communities
- Polaris—Domestic Workers Face Economic Devastation During the COVID-19 Pandemic
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime—Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Trafficking in Persons: Preliminary findings and messaging based on rapid stocktaking
- The Imprints of Sexual Trauma: How the COVID-19 Pandemic May Trigger Survivors

COVID-19 AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING: RELEVANT RESOURCES

The COVID-19 pandemic poses unique challenges to the anti-human trafficking field. The following resources provide guidance on how to proceed with a variety of services, all of which may impact victims and survivors of human trafficking. Click on the titles below to access the resources.

- **Office on Trafficking in Persons: Resources to Address Challenges Related to COVID-19**
- **Shared Hope International Anti-Trafficking Resource Network: COVID-19 National Resources for Trafficking Survivors and the Anti-Trafficking Field**
- **Greater New Orleans Human Trafficking Task Force: Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic Online Resource**
- **Futures Without Violence—Resources for Economic Empowerment Programs: Responding to COVID-19**
- **Technology Safety & Privacy: A Toolkit for Survivors**
- **Tahirih Justice Center: A Guide on Adapting Trauma-Informed Lawyering Best Practices During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

SPOTLIGHT: NEW HUMAN TRAFFICKING SURVIVOR ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Survivor Assistance Program—Lutheran Services Carolinas

Lutheran Services Carolinas is expanding services to foreign born as well as domestic survivors of human trafficking in the Midlands. Under the Survivors Assistance Program (SAP), LSC will have two programs as of 5/11/20:

1. Trafficking Victim Assistance Program (TVAP)

- Comprehensive Case Management
- Funded through USCRI (OTIP)
- Serving foreign-born minors and adults who are trafficking survivors

2. Dignity of Work (DOW)

- Employment Assistance Program
- Specialized pre-employment and employment services to prepare clients to join the workforce
- Funded through USCCB (OVC)
- Serving foreign-born & US Citizen adults and minors 16 years or older who are trafficking survivors

LSC Survivors Assistance Program services are offered within designated geographic areas in North and South Carolina. Requests for services outside these areas will be assessed on case by case basis. Contact the South Carolina service area by phone at 803-750-9917 or by email at survivors@lscarolinas.net

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. It is a time to raise awareness of those living with mental health issues in order to help reduce the stigma so many experience.

- Office for Victims of Crime: Vicarious Trauma Toolkit
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: Treatment Locator
- National Institute of Mental Health: Getting Immediate Help in a Crisis
- The Jed Foundation: Mental Health Resource Center
- National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma, & Mental Health: Resources for Advocates

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

- Domestic Victims of Human Trafficking Services and Outreach (DVHT-SO) Program: Close Date is 6/24/20
- Demonstration Grants to Strengthen the Response to Victims of Human Trafficking in Native Communities (VHT-NC) Program: Close Date is 7/06/20
- Office on Trafficking in Persons Human Trafficking Youth Prevention Demonstration Grants: Close Date is 7/31/20

UPCOMING TRAININGS

SOAR Trainings with the Office on Trafficking in Persons

In response to the growing demand for online trainings, the Office on Trafficking in Persons and the National Human Trafficking Training and Technical Assistance Center are offering free 1.5 hour virtual SOAR to Health and Wellness trainings to teach providers how to identify and respond to human trafficking. Click on the dates below to access the registration links:

-June 17th, 1-2:30PM

-July 29th, 1-2:30PM

-August 19th, 1-2:30PM

Office of the Attorney General's Virtual VAWA Training

In response to COVID-19 and social distancing, the 2020 Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking and Harassment Training hosted by the South Carolina Attorney General's Office will be offered virtually. Instead of hosting all-day trainings at four different locations, the trainings will be hosted online as a three-day series with two-hour presentations each day. This training is catered to law enforcement officers, judges, prosecutors, victim advocates and other victim services providers.

5/29 at 10:00-11:00AM
State & Federal Firearm Prohibition by Justin Holloway, US Attorney's Office

11:00AM– 12:00PM: Domestic Violence Case Study Analysis by Heather Weiss, South Carolina Attorney General's Office

6/1 at 10:00-11:00AM. Early Trauma's Long Reach: Implications for Victimization and a System of Coordinated Survivor Care by Patrice Penney, University of South Carolina

11:00 AM-12PM: The Intersection and Substance Abuse and Violence by Jess Parrot, Keystone Substance Abuse Services

Register at youbreakthesilence.com

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